



PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING LESSONS FROM 24 GURUS OF UDDHAVA GĪTA

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ABSTRACT

The quintessence of psychological counsel elucidated by 24 Gurus in the treasure trove of Uddhava Gīta (UG) by Śrī Dattātreyā, an Avadhūta (an ascetic), enunciates the path to attain the state of Psychological Well-being, also designated as Eudemonic Well-being. The primary focus of the present study is to empirically assess whether the 24 Gurus demonstrate all the six components of Psychological Well-Being like Self-Acceptance, Autonomy etc. The investigation, based on Hindu scriptures, Upaniṣads and Bhagavad Gīta, analyses how the teachings imparted by the 24 Gurus could help maintain psychological satisfaction and happiness in the mundane world. Uddhava Gīta spins around all concerns pertaining to psychological dependencies and traumas, to provide a pragmatic facet to the psychological constitution of a personified soul, leading to achievement of Self-actualization, culminating in Self-realization or Self-transcendence.

KEYWORDS: Uddhava Gīta, Psychological well-being, Eudemonism, Self-actualization, Self-transcendence.

INTRODUCTION:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructs Uddhava Gita to Uddhava by expounding the worldly attachments that entangle the human mind and, the need for men to go beyond the sensual desires (Vyasa, 2009, v.1.9). Uddhava responded that it was not easy to overcome allurements of attachment as the human mind easily falls victim to the seductions of the world (Vyasa, 2009, v.1.15). To shed light on Uddhava's queries, Śrī Kṛṣṇa narrates the story of Śrī Dattātreyā, an Avadhūta, who learnt the wisdom of life from 24 Gurus in creation. The Avadhūta Upaniṣad defines Avadhūta as an individual who is immortal and having discarded all the worldly ties moves around the world freely (Vyasa, 1978, v.1-3). Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then stresses the importance of carrying out one's duties sans desire for rewards or expectation of results. This selfless act has to be done with one's mind fully tied up in the enquiry of the Self – acme of happiness and, a way out from all the anguish of life. Śrī Kṛṣṇa stresses the same ideology in Bhagavad Gīta where he advises Arjuna that 'one's right is to work passionately, but never to the result of their actions' (Vyasa, 2012, v. 2.17). This guidance, in fact shows the way to mental maturity, which paves way to spiritual growth. This is the secret to a successful living. Today, the concept of Psychological well-being seems relevant in guidance and counselling.

Keeping this in mind, it is inevitable to discuss the term Psychological Well-being. Modern researchers have identified six key components of well-being: Self-Acceptance, Positive Relations with Others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life and Personal Growth (Ryff, 1989a). The first component, Self-Acceptance, includes three sub-categories - Self-actualization, Optimal Functioning and Maturity (Ryff, 1989b). Self-actualization is also an integral part of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow, human beings are oriented to reach a higher goal or highest potential. He sums them up as 'What a man can be, he must be' (Maslow, 1943). According to Indian Philosophy, the highest goal of human life is to know one's true self and to thrive for Mokṣa (liberation from bondage) (Vyasa, 2012, v. 2.25 – 27, 2.30). Similarly, Maslow also finds an ideological fissure on equating Self-actualization and Self-transcendence. Precisely for that reason, Maslow put pen on paper, in his unpublished critique of Self-actualization theory, opining 'Self-actualization is not enough' for a full picture of the optimally functioning human being (Mark, 2006). Optimal functioning focuses on realization of how individuals become the best that they can be, as well as how they may achieve their personal potentials (Levesque, 2014). David Wechsler (1950) proposed that, 'Maturity can be segments of mental and other allied functions, which develop relatively independent of training and special education.' Allport described maturity as having a clear comprehension of life's purpose, a sense of directedness, and intentionality. He included warm relations with others, as a criterion of Maturity and described mature person as capable of great intimacy in love, whether with family members or friends, and as showing compassion, respect, and appreciation of others (Allport, 1961). Ryff (1989a) described Positive Relation as a quality of Self-actualizers. Ability to show in-depth love towards others, warm heartedness, trusting interpersonal relations, deeper friendship and deeper identification with others and maturity are some descriptions. Autonomy comprises qualities such as self-determination, independence, and internal locus of evaluation that regulates one's behaviour based on personal or internal standards. Hence, Ryff (1989a) also suggests these three as the pillars to define

Autonomy. Environmental Mastery includes a group of characteristics while functioning in the world, such as using one's creativity to bring change through physical and mental means; creating or choosing environment suitable for one's psychological condition and taking advantage of environmental conditions (Ryff, 1989a). Purpose in Life, indicates a sense of directness, and intentionality (Ryff, 1989a). Ryff opines that a person with such a perseverance and positive mind-set has goals, intentions, and a sense of direction, which lead to a positive and meaningful life (Ryff, 1989a). All the above-mentioned five components help in Personal Growth, which is the last and the sixth component of Psychological Well-being. Nevertheless, one has to optimally actualize oneself to achieve Personal Growth. Personal Growth is a continuous lifelong process, which has different milestones such as realizing one's potentials, staying open to situations of life, confronting new challenges, transcending them etc.

Traditionally there are two perspectives of Well-being: Hedonism, (Kahneman, Diener & Schwarz, 1999) based on an individual's happiness and experience of pleasure and displeasure in the world; the other one, Eudemonism (Waterman, 1993), is based on the Well-being of a person, where he thrives to attain his complete potential, to realize his true self. Aristotle perceives Eudemonic Well-being as the 'activity of the soul in accordance with virtue, which is a kind of Mean, aiming at what is Intermediate', a concept known as 'Doctrine of the Mean'. He opined that leading such, a virtuous life brings about happiness and the ultimate human goal is realizing one's potential. (Ryff & Singer, 2008). Nonetheless, realization of true self and true potential of an individual, known as Self-transcendence, has been the topic of discussion in Hindu Philosophy since the Vedic era. For instance, in the Kena Upaniṣad, the student enquires about the power that functions as the source of energy, which provides sentience to the senses, mind and speech. In response, the teacher clarifies that the source of sentience is Brahman (Vyasa, 1920. V. 1.1-9). Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in Bhagavad Gīta, also points to the same Brahman, as the one beyond the senses, mind and intellect (Vyasa, 2012, v.3.42). According to the Hindu philosophy, an individual, through conscious awareness of this Brahman, as the omnipresent and omnipotent one, realizes the existence of that same entity in oneself, leading to the recognition of one's true self and true potential. The Upaniṣad again illustrate the method of study as, Śrāvana (hearing), Manana (reflection) and Nididhyāsana (contemplation) (Vyasa, 1950, v.4.5.6). The lives of Satyakāma Jābāla (Vyasa, 1992, v. 4.4-9), Upakosala Kāmalāyana (Vyasa, 1992, v.4.10-15) etc. bear testimony to such learning practices. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in Bhagavad Gīta concludes that through the attainment of esoteric knowledge, one can win over the greatest foes of human mind such as lust, greed, jealousy, ego etc. (Vyasa, 2012, 3.43). From the characters' revelations in the Uddhava Gīta, it can be implied that Uddhava Gīta contains the essence of the Upaniṣads and Bhagavad Gīta. The counsel given by the 24 Gurus were not divergent from the Upaniṣadic teachings, as the ultimate goal is to remove the causes of all sufferings and impermanence of this fleeting world.

This study discusses three important aspects concerning Well-being. Firstly, whether the 24 Gurus of Uddhava Gīta operationalize the key components of Psychological Well-being. Secondly, how the teachings imparted by these Gurus help maintain psychological satisfaction and happiness, while living in this materialistic world. Thirdly, whether the Gurus provide a clear understanding of

Eudemonic perspective, based on the Indian tradition that leads one to Self-realization.

METHOD:

The 24 Gurus considered were from diverse backgrounds of existence. We have categorized the 24 Gurus under four different heads viz. [1] the five basic elements (Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether) and Ocean, [2] the celestial bodies (like Sun and Moon), [3] Insects (like Honeybee, Moth, Spider, Caterpillar & Wasp), fish, reptiles (Python and Serpent), birds (Pigeon and Eagle), and animals (Elephant, Deer), and lastly [4] human beings of various living conditions and occupations (like Child, Honey Gatherer, Pingala [a prostitute], Maiden girl, Arrow-Maker). The different categories of beings were analysed to comprehend whether they exemplified the definition of the six important psychological components like Self-Acceptance, Positive Relations with Others, Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in Life and Personal Growth. Analytical study of the first two categories was performed based on the spiritual texts, Bhagavad Gita, Uddhava Gita and Upanishads, to appraise their capability towards achieving Well-being. An empirical analysis was conducted to understand the experiences and revelations of beings of the last two categories. A graphic representation of the six components of Psychological Well-being, as portrayed by the twenty-four Gurus is shown in . In the graph, the horizontal axis represents the 24 Gurus from Nature depicted in Uddhava Gita whereas the vertical axis represents the six components of Psychological Well-being.

ANALYSIS:

As noted earlier, this study focused on six major Psychological components put forward by Ryff. (Ryff, 1989a). Our focus was to analyse whether they reflected the teachings imparted by the 24 Gurus.

1. Five Elements and Ocean

Hindu philosophy perceives the five basic elements, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether in a subtler and metaphysical context, but Uddhava Gita envisions and studies them in a grosser manner, emphasizing their psycho-spiritual aspects. According to Hindu tradition, Earth is not merely one of the planets in the solar system, but a source of wealth through its bounteous natural resources as well as trove of basic materials and spiritual vibrancy. In the Hindu traditions, Earth has numerous aliases, such as Ratnagarbha (Womb of Jewels), Vasundharā (One who holds riches), Sarvamsahā (one who bears everything), Kṣmā (ability to endure heaviness) etc. (Amarasimha, 1913). Śrī Dattātreya says that one can absorb and appreciate universal values such as forgiveness, tolerance and patience from Earth. For the very reason that, whatever one does to the Earth, it will never harm back. Thus, Earth symbolises the epitome of tolerance. Śrī Dattātreya also says (Vyasa, 2009, v.1.37), 'even if another fellow being harasses a person, the latter should be able to be calm, exercise, tolerance, without any feelings of vengeance. Such a person is considered to be brave'. To forgive our foes or relations, a hard-hitting chore that one could certainly learn from Earth. These are traits of Positive Relations with Others. Through Her ability to strive towards highest potential and Maturity, Earth teaches the world about Self-Acceptance and Autonomy. Whatever harm may people do to Earth, She tolerates and provides comfortable living environment to all entities. This shows Her Mastery over external environment. Moreover, even if one cuts the branch of a tree on Earth, it again unhesitatingly provides all with fruits and crops. Thus, Earth finding its very Dharma to be followed in life, also teaches us to discover the Purpose in Life and to thereby accomplish Personal Growth. (See Fig. 1)

Water teaches the nature of purity. Moreover, it is a great model to grasp Environmental Mastery, by being in control of the situation in which it is placed. People throw filths into the Water; but what so ever it accepts everything and keeps on flowing in its natural way, purifying everything that comes in its path. Thus, it also finds its Purpose in Life and advances towards its Personal Growth. Likewise, one should be able to foster purity in one's speech, thoughts and actions in life (Vyasa, 2009, 1.44). Thus, in one way, Water also portrays the great quality of Self-Acceptance. Besides, Water makes an enviable spectacle of Autonomy by being independent and going about its own life. Water remains immune to communal stresses, as it resists to behave negatively, avoids any form of discrimination with the strength of. Consequently, Water offers another prodigious lesson on upholding a Positive Relation, where a person can influence everyone in an altruistic manner.

Fire, while illumining, swallows whatever runs into it. Fire, never tainted, purifies by burning off all contaminants and everything in its way. Accordingly, Fire conveys the message of Autonomy and Self-Acceptance by remaining unblemished in all circumstances. It also purifies all that comes within its touch thereby portraying Positive Relation. Moreover, Fire imparts the lesson that, one should remain unattached even when invited to indulge in sense objects. Through this, Fire inculcates the great message of Environmental Mastery by empowering the mind. Fire neither needs nor demands any shape of its own; it merely takes up the silhouette of any object within its domain. Thus, Śrī Dattātreya conveys that the soul also reveals the persona by residing in a specific body, constrained by the actions (Karma) of the past births. The Fire thus teaches us to maintain purity in our actions (Karma) to accomplish Personal Growth and thereby to find the true Purpose in Life (Vyasa, 2009, v. 1.45-46).

Air is colourless and odourless by nature. It moves unobstructed and yet remains

unperturbed thereby, displaying Autonomy and Self-Acceptance. Air teaches the necessity of being free from all contamination, and of steering clear of the distractions caused by the material world. This nature of Air conveys the lesson on how to gain Positive Relation by accomplishing Environmental Mastery over the circumstance that one confronts. The ubiquitous Air serves as a reminder to remain unaffected by the illusory lures of the worldly temptations (Vyasa, 2009, v. 1.39-41). Accordingly, Air remain as an exemplary archetype to advance in Personal Growth and moving ahead in life by realizing the true Purpose in Life.

The Sky stays unaffected even though the clouds cover it every now and then. Thus, it's positive nature and perseverance counsels us on the virtues of Self-Acceptance and Autonomy. In addition, the vast emptiness of the Sky display its unpretentious nature amidst perturbations. Accordingly, the Sky directs one to remain free of emotions, through strong insight and therefore instils Environmental Mastery. The Sky conveys a principle of maintaining Positive Relation with others to overcome life tribulations to achieve Personal Growth. Śrī Dattātreya says that Sky's nature to remain undisturbed amidst strong winds conveys the message that the self remains unaffected in all vicissitudes of life (Vyasa, 2009, v. 1.42-43). Thus, Sky also counsels us to stay focussed in the true Purpose in Life.

An Ocean maintains its level, remains within its boundaries except during natural calamities, and thus portrays Environmental Mastery. Ocean levels neither surge up, due to excessive inflow of rivers nor down nor due to slowdown of flow of rivers. Thus, through Optimal Functioning, Ocean displays Self-Acceptance. Moreover, the determination of its own life and independent nature portrayed by Ocean displays Autonomy. It is ideal to balance one's emotions in situations of trials and tribulations in life. This will smoothen the path to build Positive Relation with others, thereby help to accomplish Personal Growth. Bhagavad Gita uses the same analogy while explaining that an individual should be able to maintain his equanimity of mind amongst all the enjoyments (Vyasa, 2012, v.2.70). This could empower a person to ascertain the Purpose in Life by overcoming all predicaments encountered in life.

By their exemplary behavioural traits, the five basic elements along with Ocean, remain persistent as the finest ideal to strive for, mastering the six aspects of Psychological Well-being. One who conquers the acme of Psychological Well-being, inevitably realizes the pinnacle of Self-actualization. Eventually, these Gurus point towards the path of transcendental truth that one need to ultimately accomplish in life.

2. Celestial bodies

Śrī Dattātreya imbibed knowledge from two celestial bodies, Sun and Moon. Sun and Moon remain as impeccable models to rise up to the state of Psychological Well-being. Śrī Dattātreya professed that 'the real Sun is one and undivided, while its replication is perceived in countless life forms. Similarly, the Supreme consciousness is one, and echoed in innumerable physiquies' (Vyasa, 2009, 1.50-51). The ātman (soul), eternal power, is not just confined to the body. It provides sentience to every living being, and remains immune to transformation or destruction. This is the vital philosophical teaching conveyed by Śrī Dattātreya (Vyasa, 2012, 2.20). In addition, the Sun vaporizes water by its powerful light rays and ultimately returns it back to the Earth in the form of rain. Thus, from Sun's life instance Śrī Dattātreya conveys that, similarly one can accept objects of senses but need the perseverance to renounce them, when required. The act of Sun, vaporizing and subsequently providing water through rain to all living entities shows its selfless action. Through Optimal Functioning and Maturity, Sun unswervingly does its act for the betterment of humanity and thus portrays Self-Acceptance. The act of evaluating its own life by also shows Sun's adeptness in Autonomy. The advancement in Personal Growth depicted by Sun is also revealed through its altruistic deed, which is a key to achieve overall happiness without getting distracted, to finally accomplish the real Purpose in Life. Hence, by executing its duty, with dedication for the betterment of the humanity, Sun showcases the power of Positive Relations through selfless act. Moreover, by controlling the tribulations and by being in charge of all the situations, Sun also portrays Environmental Mastery.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa discussed in Bhagavad Gita, 'just like an individual goes through teenage, adult and old age, the soul transmigrates from one body to another. Thus, a mature person never gets disheartened thinking about such a change' (Vyasa, 2012, v.2.13). Lesson that one can imbibe from Moon is quite similar because it consistently stays unruffled in spite of the continuous waxing and waning. Moon by depicting a positive view of itself, remains as an unsurpassed example for Self-Acceptance by overcoming all the fluxes in different phases of life. In effect, by overcoming the ebb and flow of life, Moon continues to carry out its obligations. By overcoming such perturbations, Moon gains Environmental Mastery. Likewise, one should remain undisturbed while passing through different phases of life, by the continual changes that happen in the body, from birth to death, wading through illnesses and old age (Vyasa, 2009, v.1.48). Such an individual will also gain the proficiency to display advancement in Personal Growth, by finding its true Purpose in Life. Furthermore, the act of Moon, reflecting and spreading the light of Sun to all living entities, apart from its own problems of waxing and waning, symbolizes Positive Relation with Others. Moon's behavioural phenomena also provide good instances about Autonomy, based on qualities such as self-determination, independence, and .

Moreover, by imbibing such knowledge, an individual can practice detachment from material objects, to perform their actions with dedication. Śrī Kṛṣṇa proclaimed that an individual could achieve this through abhyāsa (constant practice) and vairāgya (dispassion) (Vyasa, 2012, v.6.35). Evaluating one's life by internal standards aids one perform autonomous deeds, to gradually touch the pinnacle of Self-actualization to ultimately transcend oneself to attain Self-transcendence.

3. Insects, fish, reptiles, birds and animals

Śrī Dattatreya revealed that he imbibed knowledge, even from insects, such as Caterpillar and Wasp, Honeybee, Moth, Spider; from the Fish; from reptiles such as Python and a Serpent; birds such as Pigeons and an Eagle and animals such as Elephant and Deer.

Knowledge imparted by insects:

- a) Bumblebee roams from one flower to another to gather honey. It never gathers all the honey that it requires from a single flower. Thus, by acquiring only what is essential for its needs, a Bumblebee espouses Positive Relations and Autonomy. If the bee overstays in the same flower, at dusk, the flower petals may droop, trapping the honeybee inside; the bee ends its life right there. This portrays man's obsessions and blind attachments in day-to-day life (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.9-12). Hence, the story of Bumblebee represents the inevitability of gaining Self-Acceptance through Optimal Functioning and Maturity. Through its action of moving from one flower to other, Bumblebee shows independence meanwhile through Maturity it regulates its behavior from within. It is able to increase its life span through controlling the complex environmental condition. Thus, the Bumblebee's example also illustrates Environmental Mastery.
- b) A moth tempted by gleaming light, gets attracted towards its beauty. It finally jumps in and gets burnt. The moth is the best example for man's careless pursuit of insatiable infatuations and cravings (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.7-8). The Kāṭha Upaniṣad explains that the Creator has created the sense organs in a way that it always focuses at the world outside. However, a wise man directs all the senses inward and seeks the eternal Truth (Vyasa, 2005, v.2.4.1). The analogy of moth explains the importance of controlling the senses; this is gained through self-determination and regulation of personal behavior. This instance portrays the need to procure Autonomy by being independent and determining in one's own life as well as the need to gain Environmental Mastery by being in charge of the situation. The moth does not indicate optimal functioning and Maturity to maintain proper functioning of its own life. Thus, moth's failure, counsels us to cultivate Self-Acceptance and Purpose in Life, to assess one's life by that will help one to progress in Personal Growth.
- c) The Wasp traps a caterpillar in its mud hive and returns daily to sting the worm. The caterpillar, frightened by this constant process, continually contemplates on being attacked by the Wasp. Finally, the caterpillar gets metamorphosed as a Wasp (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.23). This conveys the message that whatever one constantly thinks of, in course of time, they attain that. If one has a vision to achieve a respectable and gratifying position in life, one needs to, incessantly contemplate on that aim with a positive outlook. The caterpillar's example teaches us the need for self-determination, regulation of behavior from within and Maturity. It also shows that everyone needs a Purpose in Life to be able to succeed. The caterpillar grows up to become a wasp, thereby depicting a Positive Relation. It adapted to whatever circumstance it was in and thereby revealed Environmental Mastery. Moreover, the adaptation to whatever circumstances caterpillar was in, made it have a positive view of itself and was able to eventually determine about its own life. Caterpillar thus depicts Self-Acceptance and Autonomy. Hence, for an individual, this instance shows the prominence of Personal Growth to grasp his/her highest potential of Self-actualization. Moreover, the lifetime instance of Wasp and Caterpillar reveal the surpassing message about the way to accomplish Self-transcendence.
- d) Spider spins a beautiful web of silken thread. It catches hold of small flies caught in that web. Finally, the Spider takes in the entire web back to itself. Thus, Spider teaches the biggest crux of the supreme reality. The Supreme Self, creates the entire world and the beings in it, using His own Māya (illusion) and finally, withdraws the entire creation back into Himself. The Supreme Self has no cravings and is beyond the realms of cause and effect. The Spider reminds us of Supreme Self's divine play, and shows us the path to go beyond, to realize the Supreme Self (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.21). This analogy illustrates that one should endeavor to reach one's highest potential and transcend that state to realize the Self, which is reaching a state, higher than Self-actualization. Here the individual recognizes a higher entity, beyond the grasp of the senses in the material world. This is achieved through surpassing Autonomy and Environmental Mastery. In order to achieve the state of Self-realization, one cannot stop, but continually develop his/her potential, expanding his mind and individuality. Thus, through Self-Acceptance and Positive Relation, one attains Personal Growth. This creates an awareness and realization that a single Supreme Consciousness pervades the whole universe. Accordingly, one would be able to realize the ultimate Purpose in Life. Thus, the life instance of Spider

conveys all the six components of Psychological Well-being. (See Fig.1)

Knowledge imparted by the fish

A fish is caught through a tasty bait. It is because of its intense, uncontrolled sense of taste that it meets its end. Hence, Śrī Dattatreya comments that 'among all the sense organs, tongue is the most turbulent sense organ to gain control over'. 'It is very easy to control all the other senses by merely controlling the tongue' (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.19). Thus, we can imbibe knowledge about the need for self-determination and freedom. This analogy helps us to think and gain mastery over different situations that might drag one to the pitfall of ensnaring sensual inclinations. Hence, the fish imparts us the knowledge to foster Autonomy, Self-Acceptance and Environmental Mastery. The fish also teaches us that one should sustain Personal Growth by not falling in the trap of sensual cravings and desires that misdirect one from the main Purpose in Life.

Knowledge imparted by reptiles

- a) A python eats whatever comes in its path whether it is adequate or not, bitter or sweet. Furthermore, the python connotes that one should remain satisfied and accept whatever that comes across in one's life, whether it is pleasure or hardship. Hence, python illustrates the moral of Environmental Mastery, by portraying Self-Acceptance, Positive Relation and Autonomy in its life. By imbibing such ideals, one can increase awareness of one's action (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.2). Python counsels us to not deviate from our path and, bring an awareness of one's actions to attain Personal Growth and Purpose in Life.
- b) Śrī Dattatreya quotes the example of a Snake shedding its skin. This conveys the message that one should let go of past glooms in life, and be prepared to face future, by overcoming negative feelings towards those who have caused distresses in one's life. Hence, it teaches Positive Relation. Snake also imparts the knowledge of Environmental Mastery by portraying Self-Acceptance and Autonomy. Apart from this, one should always keep in mind the fact that death can snatch one's life at any moment. Therefore, one should neither lament on the past miseries nor get lost in plans for the future, and burn up one's present (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.15). By accepting this inevitable truth of death, one should lead a meaningful life by having Personal Growth and Purpose in Life.

Knowledge imparted by birds

- a) The story of pigeon demonstrates the affectionate inseparable life of a loving twosome pigeon along with their offspring in a forest. Once their babies were caught in the hunter's net. Powerless to bear the parting, owing to their deep attachment to their young ones, they too jumped into the net, and merely gave up their lives. The hunter returned happy with the entire catch. Thus, the Pigeons counsel us, against developing a blind love or strong attachment to the fleeting material world, by neglecting self-interest and without finding the Purpose in Life. The Pigeons failed to portray the six factors of Psychological Well-being and, are compared to a person, who has moved up to a high place, only to trip and fall down (Vyasa, 2009, v.1.52-74).

The analogy of the Pigeons imparts teachings on the need to gain Self-Acceptance by overcoming one's emotions and attaining the state of Self-actualization and Maturity. Purpose in Life and Personal Growth are two inseparable aspects of Self-actualizers. We may have Positive Relation with others but the analogy teaches us how to maintain relations without facing self-destruction. Autonomy and Environmental Mastery are different tools that help an individual for this purpose because one attains the power to determine about one's own life and to be in charge of all the circumstances in which one live. According to the Hindu tradition, getting a human life itself is the greatest blessing (Vyasa, 1950, v.6.2.1). This birth helps one to achieve Self-realization. However, without realizing worth of human life, man ends up running behind worldly cravings. Extreme affection and love with family and relationships are the grounds of bondage. These generate only woes in this worldly life, because falling in the clutches of possessiveness, can lead to complete destruction (Vyasa, 2009, v.1.52).

- b) Once, an Eagle picked up a piece of flesh in its beak; unexpectedly a flock of stronger birds flew towards it and attacked it to snatch the foodstuff. Out of fear, to escape from the giant birds, the tiny bird dropped the meat from its beak. The stronger birds, suddenly left the Eagle alone, but flew after the flesh. The Eagle here symbolizes sense of mastery through its ability to control the external situations and Autonomy by determining its own life by. This example also demonstrates the moral, that when an individual tries to possess things, that can cause extreme craving in others, it can lead to his own ruin. One, running after sensual pleasures, will soon clash with fellow beings, who too, run for the same, and all end up in miseries and conflicts (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.2). Hence, the Eagle also portrays the prominence of Positive Relation with Others. (See Fig.1) It tackles the most challenging situation by giving up what it procures, which indicates clear Maturity and Optimal Functioning. Thus, the Eagle portrays Self-Acceptance, and counsels the need for Personal Growth by having a sense of direction and Purpose in Life.

Knowledge imparted by animals

- a) The male Elephant enamored by lust, heading towards its mate, attracted by its scent, carelessly falls into a pit covered with grass. Finally, the Elephant is trapped and enslaved. Likewise, a passionate and lustful person, because of uncontrolled temptations towards the opposite gender, falls into traps in life. Thus, the Elephant teaches one not to let the mind to be lost, in lustful thoughts of erotic pleasure and, thereby not fall into the clutches of lust (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.13-14). The example of Elephant teaches the need to exercise self-determination and independence. This reminds us to lead a life with Autonomy by not falling prey to sensual inclinations. It also counsels us on the significance of gaining Mastery over external circumstances, and the prominence of Positive Relation by creating alertness on the reciprocity of satisfying relationships with people. The particular instance from Elephant's life conveys, that one must gain Maturity and Optimal Functioning, to build up one's own character and behavior to achieve Self-Acceptance in life.
- b) The Deer easily gets enticed to music; therefore the hunter employs music to tempt it. Because of its adoration for music, Deer falls into the hunter's trap. This instance of the Deer counsels us not to fall prey to sensual pleasures (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.17). One should not get arrogant by praiseworthy words from others. This may lead to upsurge of ego and thereby loss of one's strength to accomplish the life goal. Thus, Deer also counsels on how to gain Self-Acceptance, which aids one to find the right Positive Relation, to move ahead in life rather than leading to total devastation. Deer imparts the necessity to gain Autonomy and Environmental Mastery in life.

4. Knowledge imparted by human beings

- a) Śrī Dattātreya quotes the example of a Child. A Child is never anxious about future. It does not worry over wealth and would not be concerned over praise and reputation (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.3). Humans living in this mundane world should have a similar mindset. They should be relieved of all worries and anxieties, caused by attachments. This example points at different elements of Psychological Well-being viz. Personal Growth, Positive Relation with Others, Self-Acceptance, Autonomy, Purpose in Life and Environmental Mastery. Proper understanding of these aspects would provide a positive outlook to one's life, thereby helping one to set up a definite Purpose in Life. All of these smoothen the path towards Personal Growth. Thus, even a Child is an incomparable role model for attainment of Psychological Well-being.
- b) There was a prostitute named Piṅgala. She lived her life, eyeing for customers to give her sensual pleasure, along with money. One night waiting for very long, she could not find anyone. Becoming hopeless, and finally out of frustration, she decided to give up her plans of earning by prostitution. She was suddenly reminded of the transient nature of her body, which is nothing but bones, blood and flesh. She forthwith casts off her sinful cravings and started pondering about the indwelling divine, felt relief and contentment (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.22-44). Thus, Piṅgala instills the great lesson that one gains contentment and boundless joy by abandoning expectations from people. Through the qualities developed by Piṅgala, we can assimilate

teachings like positive attitude, self-determination, independence, directedness, having a goal in life and eagerness in self-growth. From this anecdote one can cherish knowledge about all the components of Psychological Well-being as well as the necessity to attain transcendental truth in human life.

- c) Śrī Dattātreya quotes the example of a maiden girl. Once, a maiden was pounding rice to prepare food for the guests; the bangles in her hand clattered and made noise. Sensing the presence of guests, she broke all the bangles except one, in each hand, thereby avoiding noise. The bangles represent one's cravings. Śrī Dattātreya concludes, by stating that 'this indicates that a clash of interests among people, living together creating unwanted quarrels and conflicts, can be wiped out by cutting off all extra loads of possessions' (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.3-9). From this example, we can understand that building a Positive Relation with Others and Environmental Mastery are essential pre-requisites for a pleasant living. The maiden girl teaches the moral, that by overcoming such internal conflicts, one could gain Self-Acceptance and Autonomy. (See Fig.1)
- d) The honey-bees always work with full vigor, to gather honey and store it in their safe home. Thousands of such bees in the honeycomb work together, to collect honey; the bees neither consume the honey nor give it away for the benefit of others. The Honey gatherer comes and takes away all the honey, stored with great effort bees, leading to their own end. Consequently, the instance of Honey gatherer and the honeybees conveys the need to gain Environmental Mastery by controlling and effectively using the resources and opportunities. Moreover, it impresses the necessity to gain Autonomy by evaluating one's life by . Hence, one should never hoard too much material wealth, but rather use it for the betterment of the poor and needy, and for the betterment of humanity (Vyasa, 2009, v.2.16). The Upanisads speak the same ideology, 'one should have the awareness that God is omnipresent and enjoy material objects with proper mindset of renunciation, without developing avarice towards others' (Vyasa, 2014, v.1). The anecdote of Honey gatherer and honeybee motivates fostering healthful traits, such as Self-Acceptance and Positive Relation with Others and helps one attain Personal Growth to find the real Purpose in Life.
- e) Once an Arrow smith was so absorbed in his work that he did not notice the King's grand procession that passed along the street. The Arrow smith demonstrates the significance of doing one's own duty with full focus, righteousness and dedication (Vyasa, 2009, v.3.13). One needs a one-pointed focus of the mind, keen interest in one's profession and the task on hand. Śrī Kṛṣṇa states that 'no one in this world can remain idle. Everyone has to perform actions based on one's inner nature and qualities. He further declares, the greatest action performed by completely keeping one's organs of senses, and action under control, focused on the particular task, is in fact, Karmayoga (Performing action without any expectations) (Vyasa, 2012, v.3.5-6). Thus, the Arrow smith exhibits all the six components of Psychological Well-being.

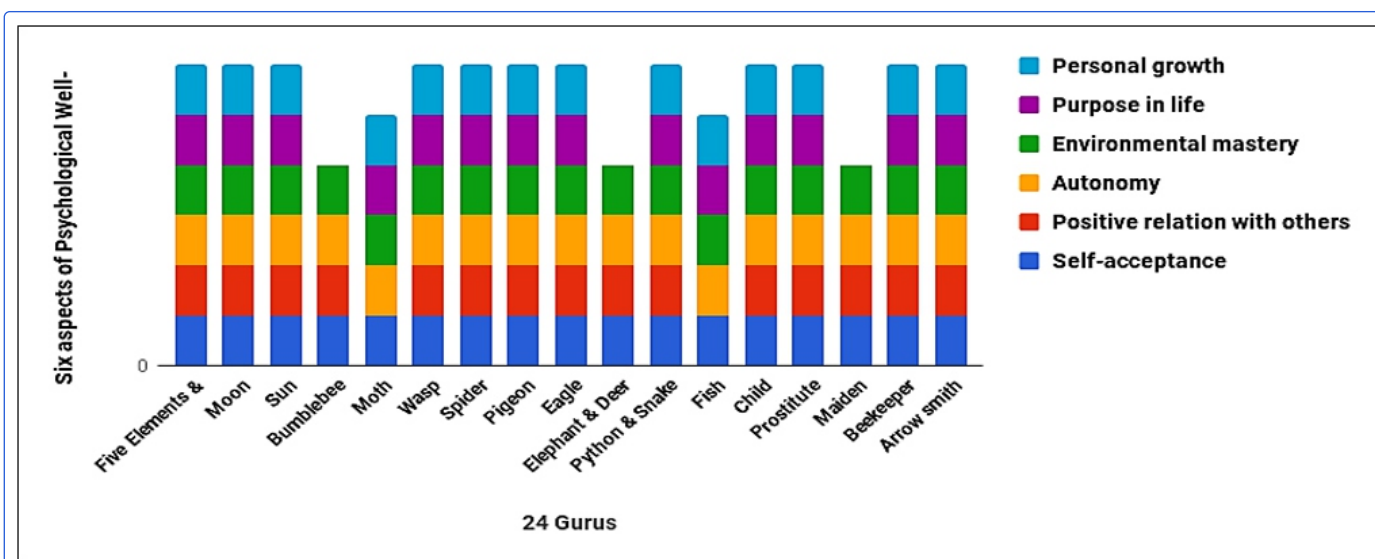


Fig. 1. Psychological Well-being modelled by 24 Gurus

CONCLUSION:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's exemplary divine discourse to Uddhava, celebrated as Uddhava Gīta, epitomizes the guidance by 24 Gurus, on how to overcome the mental turbulences that hamper the Psychological Well-being. Among the 24 Gurus, the five basic elements [Sky, Fire, Water, Earth and Air] and Ocean and the succeeding thirteen instructors [like Ocean, Sun, Moon, Wasp, Spider, Pigeon, Eagle, Python, Snake, Child, Prostitute, Beekeeper and, the Arrow smith] exhibit

the six aspects of Psychological Well-being. The life instance of pigeon shows that it absolutely remain unsuccessful in accomplishing Self-actualization. Thus, Pigeon, through its misfortune and failure, teaches us to attain Psychological Well-being and indirectly affirms the six aspects. Similarly, other instructors like moth, Fish, Elephant, Deer and Bumblebee, teach us through their failed experiences in life. Interestingly, these five Gurus, amid the 24 Gurus, exclusively counsel us to endure the five senses that perceive form, taste, touch,

sound and smell. These five Gurus indirectly encourage one to accomplish Personal Growth by having a Purpose in Life that will unquestionably lead to Self-actualization. Lastly, the Maiden counsels one to gain Self-Acceptance, Positive Relation, Autonomy and Environmental Mastery. Moreover, this particular instance from maiden's life portrays the tempting and destructive cravings of mind, which hang on as a hindrance to achieve Personal Growth and Purpose in Life. Thus, maiden also teaches us to overcome all tantalising mind cravings to accomplish Self-actualization. Overall, this component-based analysis of the teachings reveal that, except for the 18 instructors, which portray all six aspects of Psychological Well-being, the remaining 6 instructors, through their life instances, exclusively depict some particular aspects of Psychological Well-being. Moreover, the 24 Gurus help us to have an introspective as well as a retrospective look at our own lives, which is known as *Simhāvalokana* (Lion's Surveillance). A lion, after walking a long distance, climbs upon a hillock and, looks back to observe how far it has journeyed. Thus, the 24 Gurus, give such an all-inclusive outlook towards one's own life for a self-reflection that will help one to accomplish one's maximum potential and expertise to gain SA. In conclusion, the first aim of this study is validated where the 24 Gurus of Uddhava Gīta operationalize the six key components of Psychological Well-being, which is the very core of mental well-being to grasp the realm of Self-actualization.

The teachings of the 24 Gurus also go hand in hand with the Aristotelian concept of 'Doctrine of the Mean', which aims at an 'intermediate' way, where one learns to accept both pleasure and pain by the same token. Here in Uddhava Gīta, the 24 Gurus point towards winning this state of mind where one is neither over-excited by life's ecstasies nor over-depressed by miseries, but live life fully. One must learn to uphold an 'intermediate' level, which is glorified as *Samatva-bhāva* in the ancient scriptures of Hindu tradition. As a final point, the ultimate way to overcome all the sufferings is to achieve happiness, by searching for it within oneself, rather than in the fleeting outer material world. Accordingly, the second aim of this study: whether the teachings imparted by 24 Gurus help maintain Psychological satisfaction and happiness, while living in this materialistic world, is ascertained here.

Maslow contrasts Self-actualization from Self-transcendence, by pointing out that Self-actualization is not sufficient to foster an optimally functioning, finest and effective individual. Eventually, man yearns to accomplish eternal realm known as Self-transcendence, where one realizes one's true Self, which is even beyond Self-actualization. The 24 Gurus are a sign of that transcendent human life that one needs to accomplish as the culminating goal. Consequently, the Gurus in Uddhava Gīta show ways of achieving Psychological Well-being that can enable self-actualization. The third aim of this study: whether the instructors provide a clear understanding of Eudemonic perspective, based on Hindu Tradition, has been substantiated.

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